

8. Short News

1. Smoke Vortex (Smoke Rings)

Recent studies explain why wildfire smoke in the stratosphere forms stable, rotating "vortices."

Formation- Smoke particles absorb sunlight, heat the surrounding air, and rise through the stratosphere.

The Rotation- As the smoke rises, Earth's rotation (Coriolis effect) induces a clockwise spin in the Northern Hemisphere and a counterclockwise spin in the Southern Hemisphere. *

Mechanism- This rotation wraps around the smoke bubble like a "collar," acting as a container that keeps the warm smoke concentrated and allows it to rise vertically for long periods.

Examples- Observed during the 2020 Northeast Pacific wildfires and at Mt. Etna (Volcanic Vortex Rings).

2. 9th Conclave of Chiefs of IONS

India assumed the Chairmanship of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) for 2026–2028 at Visakhapatnam.

What are IONS? A voluntary forum of navies from the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) conceived by India in 2008.

Membership- Over 30 member states and observers. At this 9th Conclave, the Philippines joined as an Observer.

Significance- It serves as a decision-making body for maritime security, counter-piracy, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR).

India's Role- India took over the chair from Thailand after 16 years, aligning with its SAGAR vision (Security and Growth for All in the Region).

3. FIDE Freestyle Chess World Championship 2026

Magnus Carlsen (Norway) became the first official FIDE Freestyle Chess World Champion after defeating Fabiano Caruana.

Freestyle Chess (Chess960)- A variant invented by Bobby Fischer where the starting positions of the back-rank pieces are randomized (960 possible setups). *

Purpose- To eliminate the dominance of computer-memorized opening moves and force players to rely on pure creativity.

FIDE- The International Chess Federation, based in Lausanne, Switzerland, which governs global chess and awards titles like "Grandmaster."

4. Surat- A Global Trade Hub

Surat recorded exports of \$10.55 billion in FY 2024-25, driving Gujarat's massive 27% share of India's total exports.

Gem and Jewellery Hub- Surat processes 90% of the world's diamonds, and this sector accounts for 70% of the city's total exports.

Textile Strength- Also famous globally for silk sarees and various textile products.

Main Partners- The USA (32%) is Surat's largest trading partner, followed by Hong Kong and the UAE.

5. Takeshima / Dokdo Islets Dispute

Renewed tensions between South Korea and Japan over "Takeshima Day."

The Islets- Known as Takeshima in Japan, Dokdo in South Korea, and Liancourt Rocks internationally.

Location- Situated in the Sea of Japan (East Sea), equidistant between the two countries. *

Current Status- South Korea maintains administrative control (police/infrastructure), while Japan claims sovereignty.

Significance- fertile fishing grounds and potential natural gas reserves; control dictates Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) rights.

6. Operation Chivalrous Knight 3

P.L.RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY



Building Bureaucrats Since 2006

A major UAE-led humanitarian campaign to support Palestinians in Gaza.

Objective- To provide an "air bridge" for urgent relief (food, water, fuel, and medical aid) during Ramadan.

Funding- The UAE pledged an additional \$1.2 billion, part of a larger \$7 billion regional multilateral package.

Key Projects-

1. Repairing damaged water lines in Gaza City, Khan Younis, and Rafah.
2. Operating field and floating hospitals.
3. Providing winter relief (tents/blankets) and rubble clearance.

History-

1. Knight 1 (2021)- Afghanistan evacuations.
2. Knight 2 (2023)- Turkey-Syria earthquake relief.

